

Mexico March the 4th 1836

Professor Asa Gray
Cambridge

Dear Sir

I am now for some time in the city of Mexico. My journey from the coast to this place was pleasant and interesting. In the lower country you see all green and every thing flowering plants. Few miles from Vera Cruz the Rio of Orizaba is seen covered with snow. From Orizaba to London the country looks like a Paradise; Orange trees, Caffe Plantations, all full of fruit (November) and many other plants and trees and flowers are spread out on both sides of the road. Now you are ascending higher and higher and the whole is getting a more northerly aspect. In the neighborhood of Rio Frio gigantic *Pinus* species make big woods over mountains and in valleys; on the margins of the woods I saw different kinds of *Arbutus*, *Euthroma*, *Lantana*, *Verbenaceae* etc. In the valley of this city you find all northern vegetables cultivated and also Wheat, Barley, *Medicago sativa*, and a most northerly flora *Leontodon taraxacum*, nearly three hundred species of *Compositae*, *Eupatorium*, *Solidagineae*, *Malvaceae*, *Bellis*, one plant in habitus like *Malva viscosi Drummondii* and many others. I saw some gardens, here styled botanical Gardens; but only I found Ornamental plants in them, as *Fuchsiae*, *Cameliae* and the most beautiful varieties of *Pelargonium*, *Bignoniae*, *Heulilon striatum*

Atchana, *Satura arborea*, *Colea scandens* etc. all raised in the open air. Among trees I remarked one *Crataegus* with eatable fruits like apples; *Fraxinus* and *Negundo aceroides* flowering in February, *Salix Humboldtiana* and species of *Quercus*.

On the neighboring mountains and further of are many very many and beautiful cacti (*Cereus senilis*), and in the terraces calcareous *Orchideae*; *Epidendrum* (many) *Lilia*, *Mexilicaria*, and *Felices arboreae* not yet known I think 10 different ones beautiful *Tradescantia*, *Lycopodiaceae* and *Promeliaceae* one of the last with great dark red bracteae and blue flowers etc.

All the valleys are watered by great Aqueducts; the work of the old Spaniards. Granite and Limestone are prevailing here.

The mean temperature of this valley seems to be 66° 50° F. I could make out according to the springs. The people seems to be good hearted but bigoted, sciences are more than hundred years back.

They have a Museum here, where you see birds, Minerals, Coleoptera and Indian antiquities, Corals and bones of a Mastodon all pile mile, no order in it nothing named and without catalogue.

I collected some plants but I could not do much on account of the revolution, but however the collection of plants is all the time difficult on account of robbers and thieves in the

country, it is necessary to have all the time some man along for a safeguard and therefore not to be done without great expenses. There was one man collecting for English botanists for a yearly salary of thousand dollars, but under the condition not to give one plant away. This man died, I could perhaps get this engagement, when I applied for it, but I do not like to be bound under such condition, I wish to collect for America, where is my home. If you find some way, that I could collect Plants, Coleoptera etc. for American Institutions or societies, I am willing to do it. South of the valley are two snow mountains, there must be a great variety of plants. I would be interesting for you to have these *Epidendrum*, *Promeliaceae*, *Felices arboreae* (I saw one 15' long 4" diameter) etc. in your botanical Garden, I could deliver them all as living plants. If you favor me with an answer, please send your correspondence through the hands of the American Legation, General Gadsden, the only sure way, where I am acquainted with.

I am Yours
very truly
L. C. Inverness
Professor.



Professor Asia Gray

Harvard University

Cambridge
Massachusetts